



by [Deva Hardeep Singh](#) | [Dharma Seeds Yoga Press](#)© | 05
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[New Book just published](#)

**Yoga and mindfulness hold ancient
secrets. Discover a path to inner peace,**

clarity, and a sense of something far greater than yourself”

A breakdown of some of the “ancient secrets” that yoga and mindfulness practices reveal:

The Mind-Body Connection

- **Breathwork’s Power:** Yogic breathing exercises (pranayama) teach us that our breath is profoundly connected to our state of mind. By controlling the breath, we can calm the nervous system, reduce anxiety, and improve focus.
- **Bodily Awareness:** Mindful movement through yoga asanas (poses) forces us to become acutely aware of our physical bodies. This awareness can help us identify areas of tension or pain, understand habitual movement patterns, and build a deeper respect for our physical form.

Self-Awareness and Consciousness

- **The Witnessing Self:** Meditation forms the backbone of many yogic traditions. Meditation trains us to observe our thoughts and emotions without judgment. This “witnessing” practice helps us understand that we are not our thoughts, creating a space for self-reflection and emotional resilience.
- **The Nature of the Mind:** Yoga philosophy often explores the concept of the mind as a restless entity. Through mindfulness, we begin to understand the patterns of the mind and the stories we tell ourselves, allowing us to loosen the grip of unhelpful habits.



Spirituality and Greater Connection

- **Beyond the Self:** While benefits like stress reduction and flexibility can be motivation enough, yoga ultimately has spiritual roots. Many practices are designed to bring us to a state of unity or interconnectedness – with ourselves, with others, and a sense of something larger.
- **Rituals and Symbolism:** Some yoga traditions employ chanting, mudras (hand gestures), and other symbolic practices. These may tap into a sense of ancient ritual and help focus intention, adding a deeper dimension to the practice.

Important Note:

- **Finding What Works for You:** Not everyone will resonate with the spiritual elements of yoga. The physical and mental benefits stand on their own. Choose a practice that feels right for you.
- **Modern Interpretation:** While “ancient secrets” sounds intriguing, the best way to access them is through consistent practice adapted for our modern lives. Find a teacher or style that helps you develop a sustainable and meaningful practice.

Let me know if you want to delve into any of these secrets in more detail!

[FREE download of Spirituality Workbook](#)

Prayer Journal

DATE

SCRIPTURES

GRATITUDE

NOTES AND REFLECTION

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XCVnONbSpveXi9TYou_-8j2K8lGgE_usp=sharing

Let's explore the Hatha Yoga Pradipika and the profound concepts of breathwork within this text.

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika: A Foundational Text

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika, a 15th-century text, is one of the most influential guides to classical Hatha Yoga. It emphasizes the mastery of the physical body and its subtle energies as a prerequisite for higher spiritual states. At the core of this text lies pranayama, the science of breath control.

Pranayama: Beyond Physical Breath

- **Prana:** In the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, ‘prana’ is not just about the air we breathe. It refers to the vital life force that animates all beings. Pranayama techniques are designed to manipulate and cultivate this life force.
- **Subtle Channels (Nadis):** The text describes a network of subtle energy channels called nadis. The central channel, the sushumna, is of utmost importance. Pranayama aims to clear and awaken these channels, unlocking the flow of prana.
- **Shatkarmas (Cleansing Practices):** The Hatha Yoga Pradipika lays out cleansing practices like Neti (nasal cleansing) and Kapalbhati (a forceful exhalation technique) that are essential in preparing the body and mind for advanced breathwork.

Types of Pranayama

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika outlines various pranayama techniques:

- **Ujjayi (Victorious Breath):** A slightly constricted breath that creates a soft sound in the throat. It is calming and generates internal heat.

- **Nadi Shodhana (Alternate Nostril Breathing):**

Balances the flow of prana between the left and right nostrils, promoting mental clarity and equilibrium.

- **Bhastrika (Bellows Breath):**

A vigorous breathing technique that energizes and purifies.

- **Kumbhaka (Breath Retention):**

The practice of holding the breath, either after inhalation or exhalation. This is considered an advanced technique with profound effects on the mind and prana.

Benefits of Pranayama in the Hatha Yoga Pradipika

The text describes numerous benefits of pranayama:

- **Physical Health:** Improved circulation, respiratory function, and digestion.

- **Mental Clarity:** Calmness, increased focus, and reduced anxiety.

- **Emotional Balance:** Improved emotional regulation and the release of stress.

- **Spiritual Awakening:** Pranayama helps awaken the dormant Kundalini energy (often described as a coiled serpent at the base of the spine) and prepares the practitioner for meditative states and ultimately, enlightenment

Important Considerations

- **Guidance:** While the Hatha Yoga Pradipika is a treasure trove of knowledge, it's vital to learn these breathing techniques under the guidance of a qualified and experienced teacher.

- **Preparation:** Before engaging in pranayama, it is essential to have a foundation of asana (yoga postures) and to practice the shatkarmas for purification.
- **Moderation:** Overzealous practice can be detrimental. It's best to start gradually and respect your body's limits.



Swami Vivekananda was a major proponent of Raja Yoga, and his insights on the witnessing self are foundational. Here are some key resources and passages to explore:

- **Swami Vivekananda's "Raja Yoga" Book:** This is THE primary text to consult. Within it, Swami Vivekananda offers a clear breakdown of Raja Yoga and its practices. Look for chapters and passages specifically discussing:

- **Meditation:** His descriptions of focused meditation and achieving a state of detached observation are key to understanding the witnessing self.
- **The Concept of “Samskaras”:** This refers to mental impressions and tendencies. The witnessing self allows us to see these samskaras without being controlled by them.
- **“VivekaVani” Website:** This site offers collected quotes and writings of Swami Vivekananda. Search for “witnessing” or “witness” to find relevant excerpts. <https://vivekavani.com/>

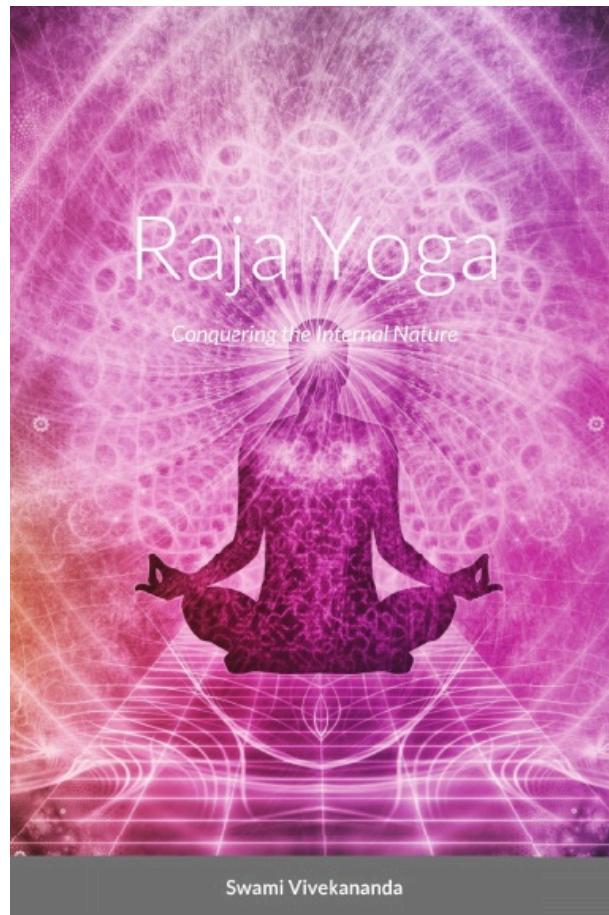
Key Concepts Swami Vivekananda Explores About the Witnessing Self:

- **The True Self:** Vivekananda posits that our true nature is not the constantly changing thoughts, emotions, or physical sensations, but the pure consciousness that witnesses them.
- **Detachment:** The practice of witnessing helps develop a sense of detachment from the ups and downs of experience. This leads to greater equanimity and peace.
- **Freedom:** By not identifying with fleeting mental states, we discover true freedom. We are no longer slaves to our emotions or thoughts.
- **Gateway to Spirituality:** The witnessing self is a stepping stone to a deeper, transcendent, and more fulfilling experience of existence.

Example Quote:

“I am the witness, and through my witnessing, nature is producing; all that is sentient and all that is insentient. ... I am the witness. I look on. When health comes I am the witness. When disease comes I am the witness...”

Free RAJA YOGA PDF book



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/13GnItTH5bHfhCWOiMuv0YZakS4jesjusp=sharing>

Let's explore Swami Vivekananda's teachings on the witnessing self in more depth. **Here are some key points and how they can lead to practical transformations:**

1. The Observer vs. the Observed: Vivekananda

emphasizes the distinction between the ever-changing content of our minds (thoughts, feelings, sensations) and the pure consciousness that observes them. This ‘witnessing self’ is our true nature – unchanging and unaffected by the fluctuations of the mind.

2. The Analogy of the Screen:

He often used the image of a movie screen – the content of the film (our experiences) changes constantly, but the screen itself remains untouched. Similarly, the witnessing self is the stable backdrop against which all our experiences play out.

3. Practice of Detachment:

The key to experiencing the witnessing self is cultivating detachment. Through meditation and mindfulness, we learn to observe our thoughts and emotions without getting caught up in them. This creates a sense of space and freedom – we realize we are not our thoughts or our emotions.

4. Beyond Ego and Identification:

The witnessing self allows us to transcend the limitations of our ego. We stop identifying as solely with our personality, story, or body. This shift in perspective can lessen anxiety, fear, and unhealthy attachments.

5. Access to Inner Peace:

As we become more established in the witnessing state, we find stillness and peace regardless of our external circumstances. Our happiness becomes less dependent on outside events or approval.

6. Gateway to Self-Knowledge:

The witnessing self is the doorway to true self-knowledge. By observing our inner world, we gain insights into our patterns, limiting beliefs, and true desires. This knowledge leads to greater authenticity and self-acceptance.

Practical Application:

1. **Meditation:** Regular meditation is essential. Focus on observing your breath, thoughts, and sensations without judgment. With consistent practice, brief moments of witnessing start to happen even in daily life.
2. **Mindfulness in Activities:** Bring the principle of witnessing into simple tasks. Feel the sensations of brushing your teeth, notice the flow of thoughts during a conversation, etc. This constant return to awareness strengthens this practice.

Important Note: Swami Vivekananda stresses that this isn't about suppressing thoughts or emotions, but simply seeing them clearly for what they are – impermanent and not our true Self.

ASK BELIEVE RECEIVE

In his book *Raja Yoga*, Swami Vivekananda delves into the concept of the observer and the observed as a fundamental principle for understanding the nature of reality and the path to self-realization. Here's a breakdown of his key points:

The Duality of Experience:

Vivekananda proposes that all our experiences can be seen as a duality: the **observer** and the **observed**.

- **The Observed:** This encompasses everything we perceive through our senses – thoughts, emotions, physical sensations, the external world. These are constantly changing and impermanent.

- **The Observer:** This is the pure consciousness, the witnessing self, that is aware of all these experiences. It is unchanging, unaffected by the fluctuations of the mind or body.

Think of it like this:

Imagine watching a movie. The ever-changing images on the screen (thoughts, emotions) are the observed. The screen itself (witnessing self) remains constant, unaffected by the content of the movie.

Why is this distinction important?

- **Understanding Our True Self:** By recognizing the observer separate from the observed, we begin to understand our true nature. We are not our fleeting thoughts or emotions, but the unchanging consciousness that witnesses them.
- **Freedom from Identification:** When we identify solely with the observed (thoughts, emotions), we become slaves to them. The witnessing self allows us to detach and gain freedom from negativity and unhelpful patterns.
- **Cultivating Inner Peace:** As we establish ourselves in the observer state, we find inner peace regardless of external circumstances. We are no longer dependent on external validation for happiness.

Vivekananda emphasizes:

- This isn't about suppressing thoughts or emotions, but simply observing them clearly.

- Consistent practice, particularly through meditation, is key to strengthening the observer state.

Additional Points:

1. Some refer to the observer as the “Atman” – the true Self in Hindu philosophy.
2. This concept aligns with mindfulness practices that train us to be aware of our thoughts and feelings without judgment.

Remember: Raja Yoga is a vast system. This explanation focuses on the observer-observed concept, but the book offers a comprehensive guide to yoga practices and achieving self-realization.

Let's dive into Swami Vivekananda's Raja Yoga philosophy regarding the nature of the mind. Here are his fundamental concepts and insights:

- **The Mind as an Instrument:** Vivekananda stresses that the mind is not who we are, but a tool that can be used for our benefit or detriment. The key is learning to master it rather than being controlled by it.
- **The Restless Nature (Chitta):** He uses the term ‘Chitta’ to describe the mind. Chitta is often compared to a lake, constantly ruffled by waves of thought and emotion (called ‘Vrittis’). The goal of Raja Yoga is to calm these waves, revealing the still and clear nature of our true Self.
- **Unconscious Depths:** Vivekananda acknowledges that a vast portion of our mental activity is subconscious.

Yoga practices aim to bring these subconscious patterns (samskaras) into awareness, so we can address them and gain freedom from their influence.

- **Sources of Mental Fluctuations (Vrittis):** He identifies several factors that agitate the mind, including:
 - External stimuli: The constant barrage of sights, sounds, and experiences.
 - Physical Illness: Imbalances within the body can disturb mental clarity.
 - Internal Distractions: Unresolved emotions, desires, and negative thought patterns.
- **Mind as Potential:** Vivekananda doesn't see the mind as inherently negative. A focused and disciplined mind becomes a powerful tool for concentration, self-knowledge, and even achieving extraordinary states of consciousness.

Key Practices in Raja Yoga to Master the Mind:

- **Meditation:** The foundation for stilling the mind's fluctuations. Through consistent practice, we train ourselves to witness our thoughts and emotions rather than be swept up by them.
- **Pranayama:** Controlled breathing techniques calm the body and directly influence the mind, creating a state conducive to concentration and introspection.
- **Self-Inquiry (Atma Vichara):** Questions like "Who am I?" are meant to pierce through the layers of mental activity and point towards our true nature beyond the mind.
- **Ethical Living (Yamas and Niyamas):** Moral guidelines such as truthfulness, non-violence, and contentment

contribute to a harmonious mind.

- **Devotion (Bhakti Yoga):** Surrendering to a higher power or ideal can lessen ego-based mental chatter and create a sense of peace within.

Important Points:

- Raja Yoga is a holistic approach: While focused on the mind, it recognizes the interconnectedness of body, breath, energy, ethics, and spirituality.
- The goal is not to eliminate the mind, but to harness its power and ultimately see beyond its limitations.



Let's delve into some specific aspects of how Swami Vivekananda illuminates the nature of the mind within his

Raja Yoga framework:

1. The Mind as a Manifesting Power

- **Beyond Ordinary Thought:** Vivekananda goes beyond the everyday perception of the mind as simply a processor of thoughts and memories. He proposes that the mind is a subtle form of energy with the ability to manifest.
- **The Power of Thought:** Our thoughts and beliefs shape our reality. Consistent focus, whether positive or negative, can attract corresponding experiences.
- **Potential for Transformation:** By consciously choosing our thoughts and cultivating mental clarity, we can shift our internal state and create a more fulfilling life.

2. The Mind, Emotions, and the Body

- **Interconnection:** Vivekananda emphasizes the deep link between mental, emotional, and physical states. An upset mind can manifest as bodily ailments, and conversely, a calm mind contributes to physical health.
- **Emotions as Fluctuations:** Emotions are seen as especially strong waves within the “lake” of the mind (Chitta). Learning to observe and understand our emotions is key to self-mastery.
- **Physical Practices:** Therefore, yogic practices like asanas (postures) and pranayama (breathwork) work by directly influencing the mind and emotions alongside the body.

3. Samskaras: The Mind's Hidden Impressions

- **Unconscious Patterns:** Vivekananda highlights that much of our mental activity is driven by deeply ingrained impressions called samskaras. These are like mental grooves formed by past experiences, habits, and tendencies.
- **Influence on Behavior:** Samskaras influence our automatic reactions, likes, dislikes, and even our personality traits. They can be positive or negative.
- **Bringing Light to the Shadows:** Yoga and meditation aim to bring these subconscious samskaras into our awareness. Once conscious, we can begin to work with them and overcome limiting patterns.

4. The Mind as a Gateway to Higher Consciousness

- **Not the End Point:** While Raja Yoga focuses on disciplining the mind, Vivekananda makes it clear that the mind is ultimately a tool to be transcended.
- **True Self Beyond Mind:** Our true nature, the witnessing self, lies beyond the fluctuations of the mind. By stilling the mind, we access a deeper state of pure awareness and peace.
- **Superconscious States:** Vivekananda discusses Samadhi, advanced yogic states where the mind becomes completely focused, leading to extraordinary insights and bliss.



Pre-Caution

While engaging in any **yoga activities, always remember:**

- **Listen to your body.** Don't push yourself too hard, and be sure to **modify poses as needed.**
- **Use props to help you.** Props can be a great way to **make poses more accessible** and to reduce the risk of injury.
- **Take breaks.** If you're feeling tired or sore, take a break from your practice.
- **Don't be afraid to ask for help.** If you're not sure how to modify a pose or if you have any concerns, ask your instructor for help.

Always listen to your body and modify poses as needed. Also review on our [website](#), our guidance on using Yoga for mental health purposes.
<https://dharmaeedsyoga.wordpress.com/control/>

Meditation

Here are 10 meditation prompts inspired by Swami Vivekananda's Raja Yoga specifically focused on exploring the nature of the mind:

Observing the Mind

1. **"Am I my thoughts?"** Sit comfortably and watch the flow of thoughts pass through your mind. Just observe, without judgment, asking yourself, "Are these thoughts who I truly am?"
2. **"Witnessing the breath"**: Focus on the natural flow of your breath. When a thought distracts you, gently return to your breath, becoming the witness of your mind's activity.
3. **"The restless lake"**: Imagine your mind as a lake. Notice the waves (thoughts and emotions) rippling its surface. Strive to be the still observer of the lake, not the movement upon it.

Exploring Emotions

4. **"Where do I feel it?"**: Bring to mind a strong emotion (positive or negative). Observe how it manifests in your body. Do you feel tension, warmth, a change in breathing? Remain the witness of these sensations.
5. **"Naming the emotion"**: Notice a strong emotion. Simply label it – "anger," "fear," "joy." This creates space between you and the feeling, lessening its grip.

Samskaras and Self-Inquiry

6. "**Recognizing my patterns**": Reflect on a habit you wish to change. Notice the thoughts and emotions that arise when tempted to repeat it. This awareness is the first step towards transformation.
7. "**Who am I?**": Settle into your meditation, then ask yourself, "Who am I?" Don't seek an intellectual answer, but allow the question to create stillness and openness in your mind.

Harnessing the Mind's Power

8. "**Planting seeds of intention**": Choose a positive affirmation or desired quality. With focus, repeat it silently during your meditation, planting it within your mind.
9. "**Focused concentration**": Choose a simple object, candle flame, or image. Gaze gently, and continuously bring your attention back to this object whenever your mind wanders.

Beyond the Mind

10. "**The pure witness**": After your meditation, reflect on moments when you became the observer of your experience. Remember the feeling of detachment and peace in the witnessing state.

Resources

BODY SCAN MEDITATION

1
Sit in a comfortable chair in a dimly lit room.

2
Imagine the outline of your body and slowly trace it in your head.

3
Observe the amount of pressure you're feeling against the chair.

4
Where there is more pressure and where there is less. Be mindful.

5
Start with your head. Work down to your feet. Then back up the other side of your body.

6
Take about five minutes for this exercise.

- **PTSD resources**
- **Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.** This is a free and confidential service that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.** This is a free and confidential service that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **The National Center for PTSD:** <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/>
- **The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN):** <https://www.rainn.org/>
- **The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):** <https://www.nami.org/>
- **The American Psychological Association:** <https://www.apa.org/>
- **Prison Yoga Project – 200hr Yoga Teachers Training:** <https://community.prisonyoga.org/courses/yoga-social-justice-and-leadership-a-200-hour-yoga-teacher-training/>
- **In The Rooms (web based 12-STEP rooms)** <https://www.intherooms.com/home/>
- **National Institute of Mental Health:** <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/index.shtml>

- **Attention Deficit Disorder Association:** <https://add.org/>
- **American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry:** <https://www.aacap.org/>
- **StopBullying.gov:** <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>
- **The National Bullying Prevention Center:** <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/>
- **The Trevor Project:** <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>
- **The National Institute of Mental Health:** <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/index.shtml>
- **The National Autism Association:** <https://www.autismspeaks.org/>
- **The Learning Disabilities Association of America:** <https://ldaamerica.org/>

You can also find a therapist in your area by visiting the Psychology Today therapist directory: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists>

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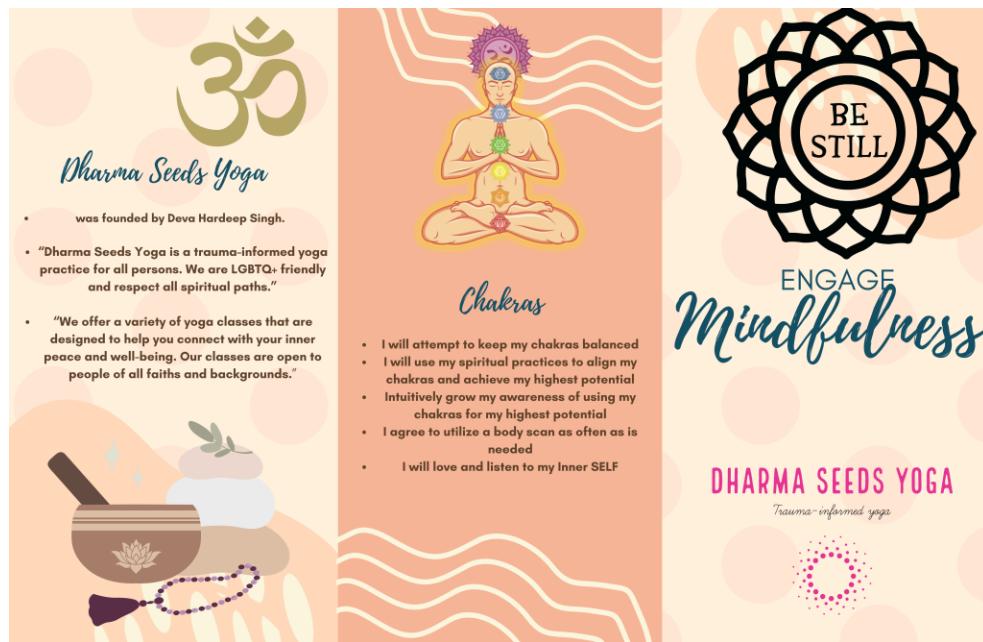
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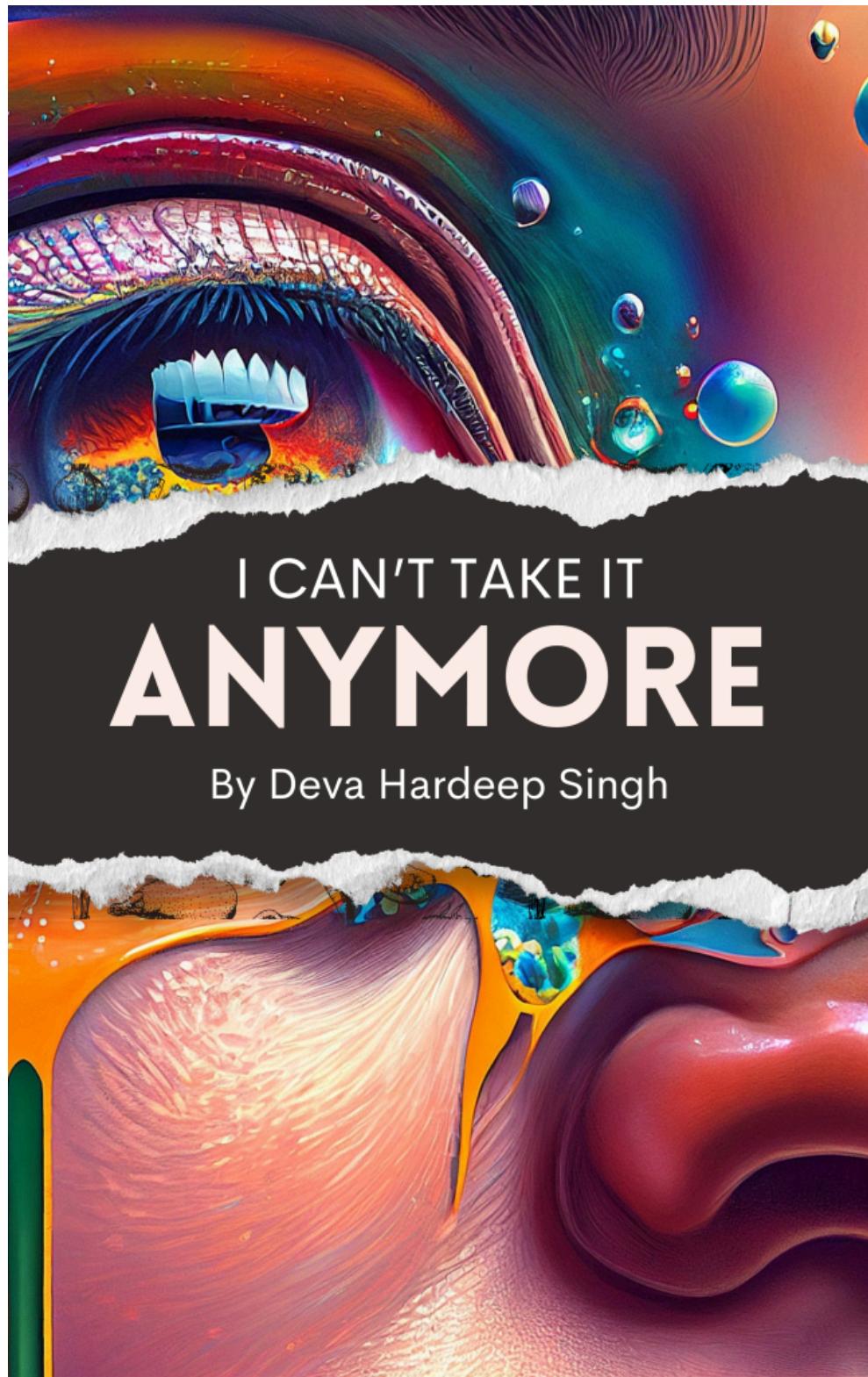
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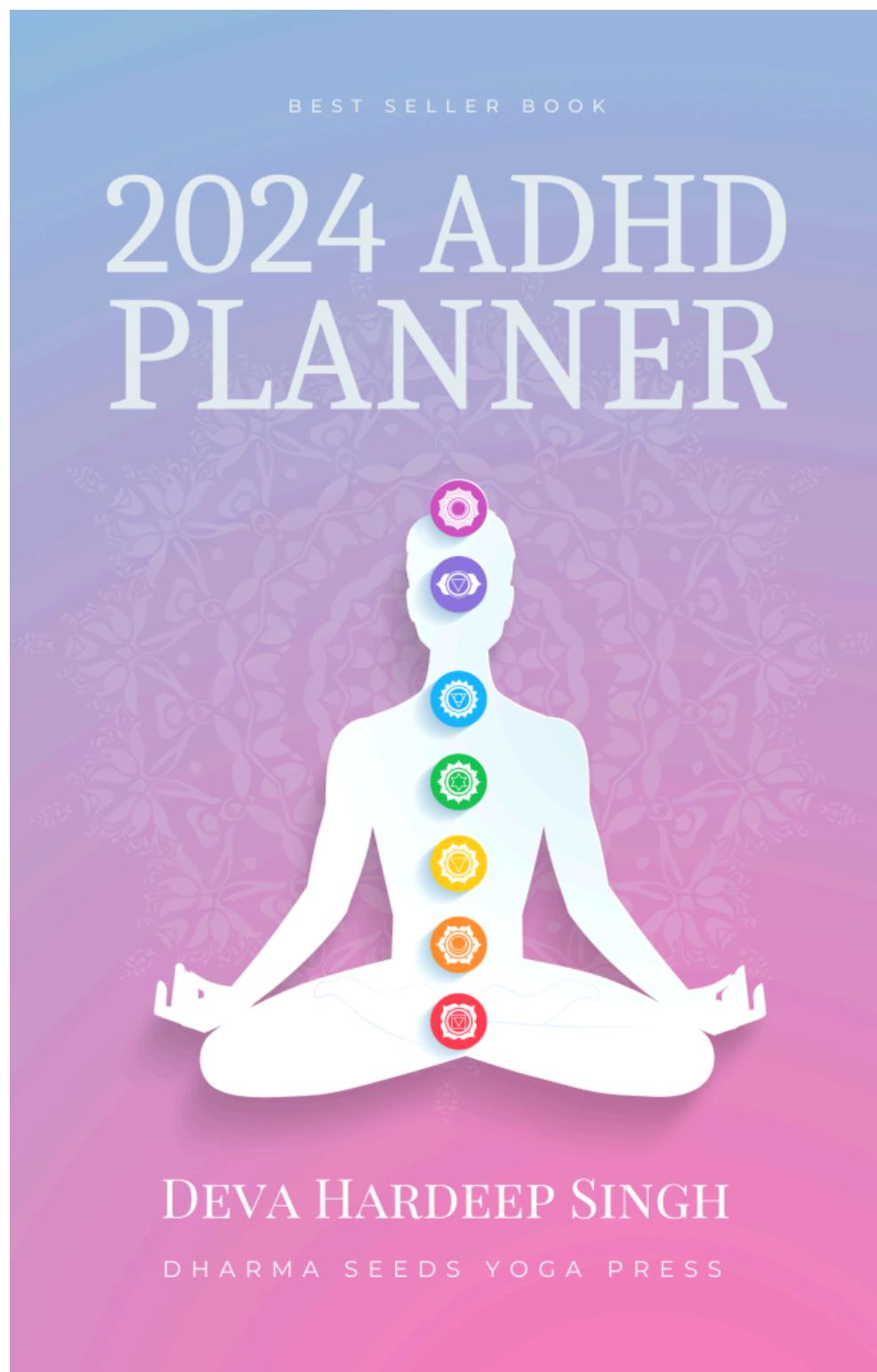
Now For Sale

Finding Light When You Feel Down This book offers a roadmap to navigate challenges and find inner peace. It starts by acknowledging moments when you feel low, as captured in

“He’s Down and Not Responding” (pg. 4). This initial recognition is crucial for moving forward. The following sections offer tools for personal growth. “The Divine Feminine is the source of our creativity and intuition” (pg. 13) suggests tapping into this inner wellspring for guidance and inspiration. Similarly, “GET OUT in Nature” (pg. 24) highlights the restorative power of spending time outdoors. Immersing yourself in nature can be a powerful way to reconnect with yourself and find clarity. The journey to inner peace also involves self-reflection and letting go. “Laying your actions at the feet of God” (pg. 33) encourages surrender and acceptance, while “Addressing the elephant in the room... Burnout” (pg. 39) tackles a prevalent issue in our fast-paced world. Recognizing and addressing burnout is essential for reclaiming your well-being. This is a true story written by a disabled guy. Helping you see past your own limitations.

New Book just published

<https://www.lulu.com/shop/deva-hardeep-singh/i-cant-take-it-anymore/paperback/product-rmgj2y8.html?g=deva+hardeep+singhu0026amp;page=1u0026amp;pageSize=4>



NOW FOR SALE

The Dharma Seeds Yoga Press 2024 ADHD Mindfulness Planner is a comprehensive resource for people with ADHD who are looking to improve their mindfulness skills. The planner includes a variety of activities and exercises, such as

mindful breathing, body scans, and journaling prompts. It also includes space to track your progress and to set goals.

The planner is designed to be accessible and user-friendly. The activities are written in a clear and concise way, and the planner includes plenty of space to write down your thoughts and feelings. The planner is also visually appealing, with calming illustrations and a soothing color scheme.

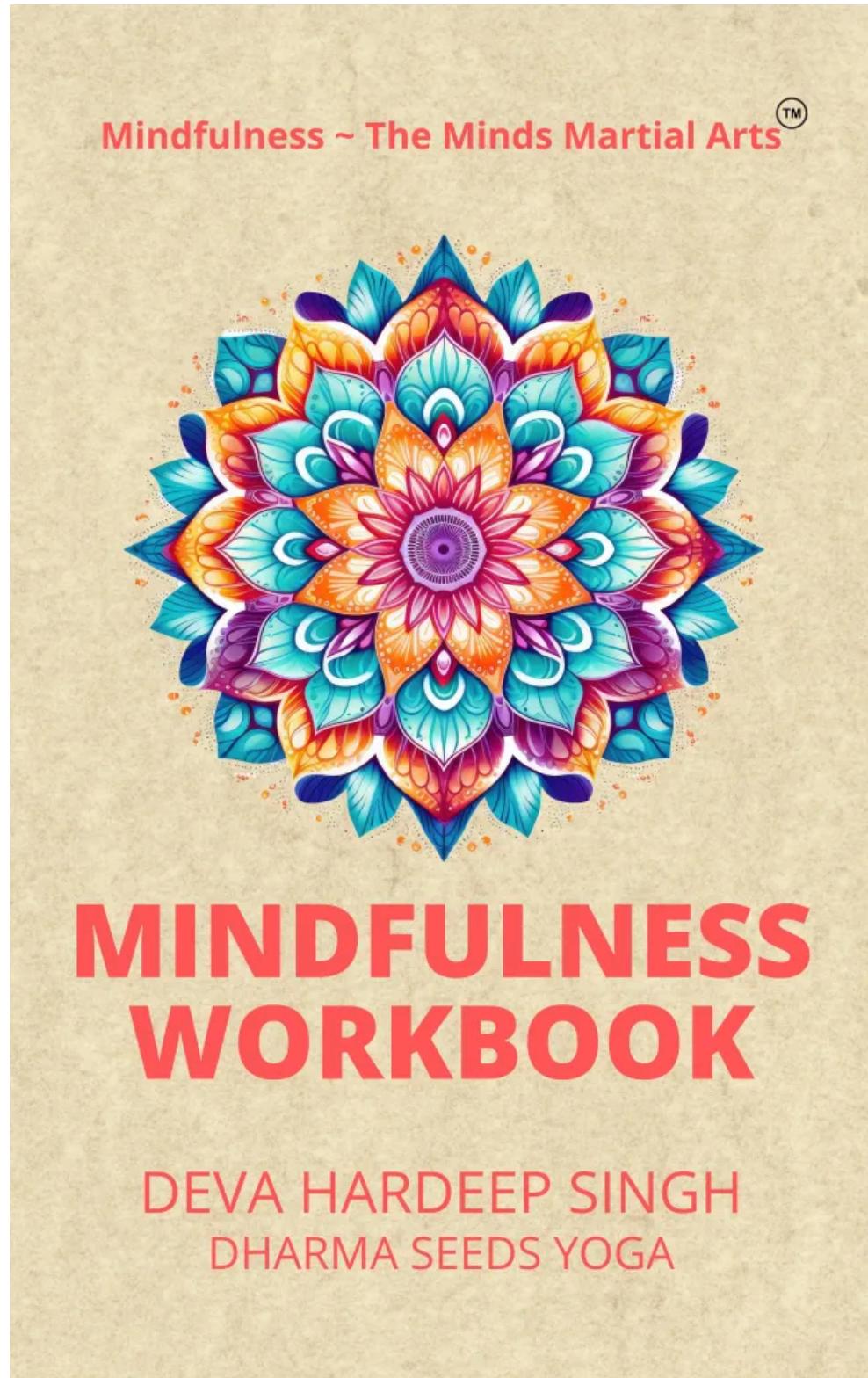
The Dharma Seeds Yoga Press 2024 ADHD Mindfulness Planner is a valuable tool for anyone who wants to improve their mindfulness skills. It is a helpful resource for people with ADHD who are looking to manage their symptoms, improve their focus, and reduce stress.

Here are some of the features of the Dharma Seeds Yoga Press 2024 ADHD Mindfulness Planner:

- Mindfulness activities and exercises: The planner includes a variety of mindfulness activities and exercises, such as mindful breathing, body scans, and journaling prompts. These activities are designed to help you develop your mindfulness skills and to improve your overall well-being.
- Goal-setting: The planner includes space to set goals for yourself. This can help you to stay motivated and to track your progress over time.
- Progress tracking: The planner includes space to track your progress on your mindfulness journey. This can help you to see how far you have come and to identify areas where you need to improve.
- Calming illustrations: The planner includes calming illustrations that can help you to relax and to focus.
- Soothing color scheme: The planner has a soothing color scheme that can help you to feel calm and relaxed.

If you are looking for a comprehensive and user-friendly mindfulness planner, the Dharma Seeds Yoga Press 2024 ADHD Mindfulness Planner is a great option. It is a valuable resource for anyone who wants to improve their mindfulness skills and to manage their ADHD symptoms.

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NOW FOR SALE

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment, without judgment. It is a way of training the mind to focus and to be aware of our thoughts, feelings, and sensations. Meditation is a form of mindfulness that involves sitting quietly and focusing on the breath.

The Mind's Martial Arts is a mindfulness workbook that can help you to learn the basics of mindfulness and meditation.

The workbook is divided into three sections:

- The first section introduces the basics of mindfulness, such as what mindfulness is, why it is beneficial, and how to get started.
- The second section provides a variety of mindfulness exercises, including guided meditations, breathing exercises, and body scans.
- The third section provides tips for integrating mindfulness into your daily life.

The Mind's Martial Arts is a comprehensive and easy-to-follow guide to mindfulness. It is a great resource for anyone who is interested in learning how to be more mindful.

Mindfulness is a skill that can be learned and practiced.

Mindfulness is a powerful tool that can help you to live a happier, healthier, and more fulfilling life. With regular practice, you can learn to control your thoughts and emotions, improve your focus, and increase your happiness.

The Mind's Martial Arts™ Chapter 1



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Deva Hardeep Singh (he/him; neurodivergent, gay, ability injured, post-traumatic stress injury, borderline personality injury) is an Oklahoman, a Yuchi Indian, enrolled in the Muscogee Nation, and studied radio/TV/film in college. He's worked as an on-air personality, author, poet, artist, administrative assistant, petroleum landman, barista, staff writer, paralegal, concert promoter, music artist manager, content producer, and graphic designer. He spent 6 months as a National Data Team volunteer for the Bernie

Sanders for President campaign. He is a freelance journalist with International papers and magazines with a social justice focus. Recently was able to join the [Hulu/FX Series Reservation Dogs](#), as an extra (Seasons 2 & 3) He's been a meditator for over 30 years (Buddhist, Chan, Zen), teaches meditation, and provides yoga instruction, and a Reiki III Master.



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